

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

JERRAMIAH T. HEALY
MAYOR



CITY HALL
JERSEY CITY, NJ 07302
TEL: (201) 547-5200
FAX: (201) 547-4288

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Contact: Jennifer Morrill
Press Secretary
201-547-4836
201-376-0699

Jersey City to Host 2009 Lakad Tulong

***A 3 Mile Walkathon Fund-Raising Event in Support of Two Major Projects:
“Handang Tumulong” Disaster Relief Fund and the Much-Anticipated Census 2010***

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy and members of the **Municipal Council** invite all to participate in the “**2009 Lakad Tulong**,” a Fund-Raising Walkathon at **9:00 a.m.** on **Sunday, October 11, 2009** which will start and end at **City Hall**, 280 Grove Street.

Launched by the **Filipino-American Community of the Northeastern Region** in partnership with the **Philippine Consulate General of New York** and with support of the **U.S. Census 2010**, the **2009 Lakad Tulong** is a 3-mile walkathon fund-raising event in support of two major projects: “Handang Tumulong” Disaster Relief Fund and the much-anticipated 2010 Census.

The walkathon route will commence at City Hall, proceed onto Montgomery Street, a left onto Washington Street, a right onto Columbus Drive, another right onto Marin Boulevard, a left onto 9th Street, another left onto Manila Avenue and will end at Grove Street in front of the City Hall.

“Your support and participation in **2009 Lakad Tulong** is vital to assisting our community and our extended community abroad,” said **Mayor Healy**. “We have a huge Filipino community in Jersey City and many of our residents have family affected by Typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana). We can all play an integral role in strengthening the unity that has been shared by the Filipinos and Americans in the community by addressing the emergency situation posed by the typhoon.”

The “Handang Tumulong” Disaster Relief Fund, a joint venture adopted by various Filipino community organizations, is a readiness project which creates a seed fund for the victims of recurrent calamities in the Philippines. Donations collected through “Handang Tumulong,” will benefit those struggling to survive the aftermath of the recent typhoon.

Furthermore, 2009 Lakad Tulong is the perfect venue to mobilize the community to raise awareness of the 2010 U.S. Census. Every 10 years, a census is conducted to count the general population. In the past Census counts, Filipinos were lumped together in the Asian/Pacific Islander category. Recognizing that Filipinos are a growing ethnic group, the federal Census Bureau in 2010 will have a specific category, “Filipino” to define their own ethnic identity as Filipinos and Filipino-Americans.

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“For a very long time, the size and impact of the Filipino-American community has been overlooked in ethnic studies of the United States,” continued **Mayor Healy**. “Filipinos can now be identified as a specific group and I urge everyone to be counted and support our efforts. An undercount in Jersey City would mean a severe reduction in our fair share of federal funding, which will directly affect the quality of life in our communities.”

The government uses census data to determine how many representatives each state should get in Congress and to distribute hundreds of billions of dollars in federal aid. With the exponential growth within the Filipino community, which is currently the largest Asian-American subgroup in Jersey City, every Filipino can now be counted.

“The census data gathered will directly affect how more than \$300 billion in federal funding will be distributed to state and municipal governments,” said **Mayor Healy**. “Clearly having every Jersey City resident counted is extremely important and will ensure that our city receive a fair share of federal funding for neighborhood improvements, social services, education, transportation and much more.”

The City of Jersey City is aggressively working to raise awareness of the importance of “being counted” in the 2010 Census program. The City’s resources are being utilized as a means to raise Census visibility. The City’s website, www.jerseycitynj.gov, is being regularly updated and there will be a dedicated e-mail account and phone number for people to call in and register to volunteer for efforts in their neighborhoods. In addition, the Census logo has been added to all printed publications and broadcast media, a PSA is airing on JC1TV, and the City’s website. Also, Jersey City facilities are being used as training sites for Census canvassers and there will be a Census survey site, making the survey readily available for completion, thereby ensuring that everyone gets counted.

It is Jersey City’s aim to rank number one in the state and every resident’s involvement is crucial to accomplish this.

To participate, each walker will be assessed a tax-deductible registration fee of \$25. Each walker is encouraged to get sponsors who will pledge and donate \$10 per mile. In the event you or your organization can not join the walk-a-thon, any donation will be much appreciated. All donations and registration fees will be made payable to FAAFL, Inc, and mailed to P.O. Box 1362 Fair Lawn, NJ 07410 (Note: in the memo portion of check, please write "Handang Tumulong Fund").

To obtain registration forms, please call: Nelsie Parrado, 201-794-7321, Roger Alama, 516-807-2882, Carmen Flores, 201-993-1158, Mark Habana, 201-841-5518, Nimia Lacebal, 973-338-1204, or Hector Magno, 732-563-4554. They are also available at the Philippine Consulate General, c/o Marivic Dimaculangan who may be contacted at 212-819-9655. On-site registration begins at 8:00 a.m. on October 11th.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.///